MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD
For the Montana National Register of Historic Places Program and State Antiquities Database

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Historical Society
PO Box 201202, 1410 8th Ave
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Property Address: **1050 S. Montana Street** Historic Address (if applicable): **1050 S. Montana Street** City/Town: **Butte**	Site Number: **24 SB 1046** (An historic district number may also apply.) County: **Silver Bow**
Historic Name: **Webster-Garfield Elementary School** Original Owner(s): **City of Butte** Current Ownership ☐ Private X Public Current Property Name: **Webster Garfield Complex Alternative School** Owner(s): **City of Butte** Owner Address: **111 North Montana Street Butte, MT** Phone:	Legal Location PM: **Montana** Township: **3N** Range: **8W** **NW** ¼ **SW** ¼ **NE** ¼ of Section: **24** Lot(s): **Unknown** Block(s): **Unknown** Addition: **Unknown** Year of Addition: USGS Quad Name: **Butte South** Year: **1994**
Historic Use: **Elementary School** Current Use: **Alternative School** Construction Date: **1946-47** ☐ Estimated **X** Actual **X** Original Location ☐ Moved Date Moved:	UTM Reference www.nris.mt.gov/topofinder2 ☐NAD 27 **X** NAD 83 (**preferred**) Zone: **12** Easting: **380886** Northing: **5095072**
National Register of Historic Places NRHP Listing Date: Historic District: NRHP Eligible: x Yes ☐ No	Date of this document: **May 29, 2010** Form Prepared by: **Diana J. Painter, PhD** Address: **3518 N. C Street, Spokane, WA 99205** Daytime Phone: **(707) 364-0697**
MT SHPO USE ONLY Eligible for NRHP: x yes □ no Criteria: □ A □ B x C □ D Date: 11/16/2010 Evaluator: John Boughton	Comments:

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION **X** See Additional Information Page

Architectural Style: **Modern** If Other, specify:
Property Type: **Education building** Specific Property Type: **Elementary school**

Architect: **John C. Link** Architectural Firm/City/State: **J. G. Link & Co.**
Builder/Contractor: Company/City/State:
Source of Information: **University of Montana architectural archives**

Location and setting. The Webster Garfield Complex is a one-story school building with an irregular footprint. It consists of two long, east-west wings connected by a shorter north-south wing on the west side, and a larger rectangular wing on the north side. Most of the roofs on the building are shallow-sloped shed roofs. Some of the building's form is broken up to step down the gradual slope from north to south on the site.

The building is located south of downtown Butte, on a block bounded by S. Montana Street on the west; W. 2nd Street on the north; S. Main Street on the east; and W. Front Street on the south. It takes up roughly twenty-five percent of this large block, and is located in the southwest corner. Commercial and industrial development surrounds the site, with the exception of the residential neighborhood to the north. The City County Home Health Agency is housed in a building to the east of the school. The building faces west onto W. Montana Street.

Materials. The historic Webster Garfield School is brick masonry construction with a built-up roof and concrete foundation. The doors are wood, and most of the windows have wood frames. An exception is the large room in the northeast corner of the building, which has steel sash. The clerestory windows are glass block. The brick has a combed finish and a relatively uniform, greenish-tan color. Contemporary corrugated siding is seen in two locations.

Massing and design. The classrooms for the building were historically located within the narrow, linear portions of the building. Other uses such the auditorium, cafeteria, and gym were clustered in the rectangular wing on the north side of the building. The offices occurred on the northwest side, near the main entry. Roof forms are broken up in response to the topography and to bring more daylight into the classrooms. The latter is accomplished with clerestory windows in a raised portion of the roof that is set back from the main facade. The classrooms themselves are located along single-loaded corridors in a largely H-shaped configuration. There are no eaves at the clerestories and end walls, but moderate eaves overhang the window walls of the classrooms.

West façade. The main entry to the building occurs on the west façade, within a projecting portion of the building just north of center. It is located on the right side and consists of a bank of five wood doors with three square lights each, surmounted by square transom windows. To the right of the doors is a canted wall that projects forward at the top, making this space wedge-shaped in both plan and section. This wall, which is about two bricks thick, is pierced with ten square openings. The name of the building, which is now called the Webster Garfield Complex ALAS (Abraham Lincoln Alternative School), is spelled out to the left of the door in freestanding aluminum letters. A concrete landing is accessed via one concrete step and a short ramp with a tubular metal rail.

The left or north side of this projecting entry wing is partially enclosed with a brick wall that extends from the face of the building to the end of the eaves. The north and south facades on the projecting entry wing, which once housed the school offices, display large, wood-frame, multi- light windows.

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The window on the north façade has 24 lights and concrete sills and a smaller, three-light window next to it. The large, multi-light windows on the south façade are separated by pilasters. The roof on this projection slopes from front to back.
To the north of this projecting wing is another decorative element that emphasizes the fact that this is the main entry to the building. It consists of six regularly spaced, vertically-oriented windows with three lights each. The bricks below are set to create vertical lines.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION CONT.

This portion of the building, which is set back from the previously-described wing, has a roof that slopes up toward the south. The building continues to the north with a large, multi-light window and a large glass block window. The window to the far left (north) side of this wing is glass block, placed high under the eaves.

The portion of the building visible to the south of the entry wing contains classrooms arranged in a north-south alignment. Each classroom has a separate roofline that steps down toward the south side of the site. Each classroom in this location has two sets of four ganged windows that have a slightly horizontal orientation.

To the south of this portion of the building is the west side of the southerly east-west wing of classrooms. On the north façade of this wing, which encloses this side of the site, are large, multi-light windows, typical of those found throughout the building. The roofline here slopes up to admit a south-facing clerestory window of glass block that lights the interior of the classroom. Correspondingly, the end wall here has a sawtooth profile.

South façade. The south side of the building has the longest wing, with two classrooms on the west side and six on the east side, separated by a secondary entry. Each bay has two sets of four ganged windows, placed high under the eaves, with a corresponding clerestory of glass block above, set back from the main face of the building. Below the ganged windows, on the interior, is the interior hallway. Below the glass block clerestories is the classroom. Each classroom bay is separated by a pilaster. This is typical throughout the building.

The entry on this façade displays the same design features as the main entry, on a slightly smaller scale. The entry occurs on the left (west) side of a shallow projection. It is slightly wedge-shaped in plan and section, and has the same canted end wall with square openings as the main entry. The roof above the door slopes up, admitting more light to the slightly recessed entry. The doors are of the same design as elsewhere on the building; wood doors with three square lights each. Here there are three doors with three-light sidelights and transom windows above. To the right of this ensemble is a bank of four, one-over-one-light windows, with a glass block window under the eaves to its right. This entry is accessed via three concrete steps with a tubular metal rail. A brick planter with a concrete base is located to the right of the entry doors, which are slightly recessed under the projecting roofline.

East façade. Around the corner is the endwall of the southerly wing. It accommodates an entry with a similar design as the other secondary entries for the school on the left (south) side. There are no other openings on the endwall. The shed roof is visible, with its small overhang on the north façade. There are no eaves on the south and east sides.

North of this wing is the three-sided courtyard that makes up the central part of the school. The north façade of the southerly east-west wing is the exterior wall for six classrooms seen on the east end of the south façade. The large windows that originally characterized the individual bays here have been partially enclosed with contemporary corrugated metal siding.
The brick piers that separate the bays and brick spandrel panels remain. In place of the original window walls are four regularly-spaced, one-over-one-lights, double-hung windows per bay. On the west side of the courtyard (the east façade of the primary north-south wing) are four classrooms that retain their original windows. The shed roofs for the classrooms step down the hill here, so each classroom has its own roof. Windows extend across the entire classroom bay, with three rows of nine lights each in wood frames.

The south façade of the northerly east-west wing exhibits a similar appearance as the south facade on the southerly classroom wing. Each classroom bay has two sets of four, slightly horizontally-oriented, ganged windows under the eaves. Visible above are the glass block clerestory windows on the higher shed roof that is set back from the main face of the building. Each classroom bay is separated by a wide brick pilaster. The end wall on this wing is of the same design as the end wall on the southerly wing.

North façade. The north façade is made up of the “L” formed by the northerly east-west wing and the northerly portion of the main north-south wing. The north face of the east-west wing exhibits the same window walls found elsewhere on the building. There are four classroom bays here, each with three rows of nine lights with wood frames, concrete sills, and brick spandrel panels.

On the far right or west side of this façade is a secondary entry with a double wood door with three lights each, surmounted by tall transoms that have been enclosed. Flanking this entry are two large glass block windows placed high under the eaves. Also in this corner is a tall, free-standing, metal stack.

The left or south side of the adjacent façade slopes up toward the south and is faced with brick. This portion of this façade has no eaves and several small windows high on the wall that have been enclosed with concrete block. There is also a broad, flush pedestrian door with no openings here. The right or north half of this façade has multi-light steel sash windows on the right side, and is clad in corrugated metal with two, two-part windows on the left side. The area below these windows is clad in brick. There are narrow eaves above.

The far north façade on the building is composed of a multi-light, steel sash window wall on the left or east side. There is a double flush door toward the center. On the right or west side is a vertically-oriented, six-light window with wood frame, and a larger 24-light window with wood frames on the far right. Narrow eaves shelter this façade.

Landscaping and site features. The site for the Webster Garfield School is largely bereft of landscaping. Aerial photographs show evidence of a dirt track northeast of the school building. The central courtyard is paved in asphalt. The area along S. Montana Street and W. Front Street is planted in lawn. There is a public sidewalk on both of these frontages. There is one mature tree and a few shrubs on the site. The property is enclosed in chain link fence. It is separated from the building to the east by a wide driveway that accommodates perpendicular parking on each side. This driveway accesses the rear of the lot.

Changes over time. Very few apparent changes have taken place on this building. A bank of north-facing windows on one wing has been largely enclosed with corrugated metal siding. What were likely horizontally-oriented fixed and awning sash have been replaced with double-hung windows. This same treatment is seen at the northeast corner of the building, but is not highly visible. A few small windows toward the rear of the structure have been enclosed with concrete block. The building otherwise appears as built in design, materials, finishes, and features.

Architectural Context: Population growth in the post-war era, particularly in the western United States, created a tremendous demand for new schools. Growth in the west was due to western migrations during the war, when newcomers were stationed at military installations and worked in defense industries. In addition to immigrants who stayed and made their home in the west, population growth was due to the post-war baby boom. In the country as a whole, enrollment in elementary and secondary schools rose from 25.1 million in 1949-50 to 35.1 million in 1959-60 *(Ogata, 2008).* The west received a large proportion of this growth.

Many schools were built after the war to meet this demand. Modern schools, whose design was based in experiments undertaken in the 1930s and 1940s, reflected changes in educational philosophy and in architectural design philosophy. In contrast to the pre-war, multi-story brick school building, the post-war school was typically one story with expansive windows and direct access to the outdoors *(Ogata, 2008).* This reflected an emphasis on adequate natural light and fresh air. Additionally, small post-war schools were placed within neighborhoods to be friendlier to young students and allow for walking access.
The National Council on Schoolhouse Construction published its “Guide for Planning School Plants” in 1946. This document emphasized the importance of flexibility in designing school interiors, which was considered more child-oriented and less authoritarian than the historical school model, where desks and chairs were fastened to the floor. The structural design of the modern school was considered flexible in the sense that the linear arrangement allowed the school to be expanded at any time. Adequate, indirect light sources were considered important in combating glare and thus fatigue. Research on lighting published by Darell Boyd Harmon of Texas in the mid-1940s led to new standards for lighting, color, and the surfaces of furniture: “Harmon’s experiments built upon wartime studies of light and color to increase morale and to decrease fatigue, but in addressing effects on children, he opened up new questions for architects, school planners, and furniture designers, and gave lighting an expanded role in the determination of form” *(Ogata, 2008).* His work continued to influence school design throughout the post-war years.

Modern schools were designed to be more responsive to the natural environment. An emphasis was also placed on being more sensitive to the psychological needs of the student. Well-lit spaces and cross ventilation were considered important, and ceiling heights were lowered to create a greater sense of intimacy for the young student. Indirect lighting that fell on the front of the classroom was considered a better response than the traditional design, which raked light

Across the desks from a 90-degree angle. The colors and reflectivity of interior surfaces and furnishings were important in achieving design goals, as were clerestory windows and expansive window walls with operable lights. The Webster Garfield Grade School incorporated these exterior elements (the nature of the furnishings is unknown). The glass block clerestory windows, which are set back from the exterior building, face added indirect lighting to interior classrooms.

The design of post-war schools paralleled similar developments in modern domestic architecture. Walls with few openings to the street shielded classrooms from traffic, noise, and other distractions. The classrooms for the Webster Garfield School were additionally separated from the street by the internal hallway. Classroom window walls face the interior of the lot, which in this case is made up of the central three-sided courtyard and the "L" shaped courtyard in the northeast corner of the site. These window walls allowed students visual, if not physical, access to the outdoors. This paralleled the residential design concept of the rear yard being shielded for privacy and reserved for entertaining and recreation. Although these design features were believed to be more conducive to learning, there was also an emphasis on making the school environment more home-like for the young student.

Innovations in post-war school design became known to local architects through professional publications and national and regional awards programs. They also became known through exhibits, such as the traveling Museum of Modern Art exhibit, "Modern Architecture for the Modern School," which was shown at universities, museums and community centers. This exhibit illustrated 41 progressive schools from the United States, Europe and Brazil, and traveled throughout the United States from 1942 through 1946 *(Mock, 1944).* These models continued to be influential from the early 1940s through the late 1950s *(Painter, 2009).*

Planning context: The open campus plan seen in this school is typical of what was being developed at the time throughout the country. *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture* defines a campus in general as follows: "A self-contained architectural composition of separate buildings arranged round a park-like expanse of lawn, often sited in open country, housing a community of students and scholars. It superseded the medieval quadrangle arrangement for universities. The first was Downing College, Cambridge, by Wilkins, begun 1806, though it seems to have been unknown to Jefferson when he conceived the University of Virginia at Charlottesville (1817-26). This was very influential and began a long tradition of university building in the USA – right to the present day . . ."

The difference between this campus and others like it, and earlier models is that this plan type utilizes a modernist vocabulary, first seen in contemporary city and institutional planning schemes in Europe in the early 20th century. Building forms and relationships recall industrial motifs, appearing to be "extruded" across the landscape. The building forms themselves appear to be "manufactured" in varying lengths. In actuality, the classrooms are the individual units that make up the building form, and the length of the building is determined, in part, by the configuration of the parcel *(Painter, 2002)*. This model is very practical for schools, as the school can be expended simply by adding classrooms at the ends of wings. This is apparently what was envisioned for the Webster Garfield School, when the community objected to selling the east side of the lot for other uses.
Another modernist motif that is exhibited in this and similar campuses is a lack of hierarchy in building forms and spaces. The buildings are equal in width, as are the spaces between them. The buildings are also similarly proportioned as the spaces. Finally, all the buildings are equal or nearly equal in height. This 'democracy' between the buildings, and buildings and spaces, also represents a modernist ideal. It is not known why the building form for this school is closer to a courtyard scheme than a "finger plan" (a form pioneered by California architect Ernest Kump). It is likely, however, that this form allowed outdoor play areas to be better protected from the weather, as the two main playing areas were surrounded on two and three sides by the building form.

HISTORY OF PROPERTY **X** See Additional Information Page

The Webster Garfield School. Prior to construction of the Webster Garfield School, the Webster Public School and Garfield Public School were in separate locations, but just a few blocks from each other, north of the present location of the school. The Webster School was located at the end of S. Idaho Street, near the intersection of S. Washington and W. Aluminum (clearing of this site allowed for the continuation of S. Idaho Street). The Garfield School was located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of S. Colorado Street and W. Porphyry Street (this site is now occupied by a small commercial building). Both were two stories and both were located in dense, urban neighborhoods. The Garfield School was in a neighborhood of mixed residential and commercial uses, and included the Emma Mine. The Webster School neighborhood was less densely developed, and was primarily residential.

HISTORY OF PROPERTY **X** See Additional Information Page

The Webster Garfield School was designed by the renowned Montana firm of J. G. Link & Co. in 1946-47 and constructed in 1949 (note that drawings for the building are attributed to John G. Link). According to the school district, it was "Cited as one of America's outstanding school buildings" at the time. It had sixteen classrooms and "rooms for sewing, cooking, gym, library, music room, auditorium and three health department rooms. All which was unheard of in those days" (*Your Butte School District, http://www.butte.k12.mt.us/alas.html).* Today the building is a public alternative school and accommodates a daycare and all grade levels. It additionally provides a number of special education and social service programs.

In 1971 the city considered using vacant land adjoining the Webster Garfield School for a 5-6 acre park, to be financed by the Model Cities program. The school board was reluctant to devote the land to a Park (it was a condition of funding that the park be dedicated to park use for 25 years), as they considered the land area more appropriately used for school expansion. At the same time, the voter's rejected a proposal to establish a fund to help purchase future school sites *("Webster-Garfield park . .," 1971).* In 1972 the school board voted to use the site for a Community Facilities Building, the required $400,000 to be financed by the Model Cities program and HUD.

The proposal passed in a close vote, against objections that the land was needed for a kindergarten. Proponents of the project noted that the money would not be available for school district facilities *("School board holding land," 1972)*. This building is in place today. In 1972 the housing authority began eyeing the site for a 100-unit, federally-funded, senior housing project that they thought the site would also accommodate. At the time, it was thought that sale of the land would finance a pre-school *("Housing authority interested in school district land," 1972).* This four-story building was also constructed, as subsidized public housing *("Federal funds back apartments in Butte,"1973).* Despite these changes, the school and the land immediately around it is intact today, and the school is still used by the district for public education.

Post-war economic trends. The Webster Garfield School was part of the post-World War II building boom that sought to provide homes, schools, churches and commercial centers to accommodate post-war growth in Montana's cities. Although some new public facilities were provided under the auspices of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (PWA) and other New Deal-era building programs in the 1930s, many facilities in Butte and elsewhere were crowded and out-of-date by the end of World War II. This was due to lack of building during the Depression and during World War II, when most resources were funneled into the war effort. The Montana economy had begun faltering in the 1920s, however, resulting in a long span of time in which facilities were often not upgraded and building was curtailed.

Butte did not benefit from the post-war boom that centers such as Missoula, Great Falls and Billings enjoyed. The post-war economy in Butte was negatively affected by a shift in the Anaconda Company's operations away from Butte toward their copper mining activities in Chile. As a rail center, it was also affected by the move away from railroads to interstate trucking to meet transportation needs *(Holmes, 2008)*. Nonetheless, Butte's schools were growing.

A 1956 study by an appointed "building survey group" for Butte's District 1 (its central school district) concluded that two new grade schools were needed immediately and repairs and alterations were needed for nine existing public grade schools. Long range plans called for three or more new grade school buildings, and possibly a second junior high school. (This study did not address parochial school needs; about twenty-five percent of downtown Butte's students attended Catholic school at this time). The committee was charged with addressing both overcrowding and obsolete building stock. It also looked at the possibility of school consolidation *("New Buildings, Repairs Recommended . . . ," 1956).*

The study looked at Butte's 17 public elementary schools and the high school. At the time, Butte children attended elementary school through eighth grade. The possibility of building a junior high school that accommodated seventh, eighth and ninth grade students was also studied. The Webster Garfield School (1949) was not studied because, as noted, it was one of two new elementary schools in the district, the other one being Whittier (1954). It was, however, noted that additions could be made to these new schools as the need arose.

By the time school opened for the 1959 school year Butte had provided new school facilities for over 300 of the 3,820 students that attended public schools in the city. A renovated parochial school, St. Joseph's, was scheduled to open in another month. The new schools were Blaine School (1959) and Big Butte School (1959) (Kennedy School today).

Since the earlier study was completed, the school district had additionally constructed a new junior high school (1957); two new elementary schools, Monroe (1958) and Lincoln (1958), and completed an addition to the Greeley School. The Catholic school system had renovated St. John the Evangelist school; added Immaculate Conception school; and had a school for St. Ann's Parish on the drawing boards *("More Than 300 Pupils to Study in New Buildings," 1959).*

The Butte Public School District's post-war building program continued with the construction of Hillcrest Elementary School (1963), Emerson School (1969), West Elementary School (originally a junior high constructed in 1969), and Margaret Leary Elementary School (1973). Today all Butte's public schools date from the post-war era with the exception of Butte High School, designed by John C. Link and constructed in 1938. The Webster Garfield School was the first in the post-war building program.

Architect John Gustav Link. John Gustav Link (1870-1954) was born in Bavaria, Germany and received his training at the Royal Academy of Landau before immigrating to the United States in 1887 at the age of 17 and settling in Denver. There he worked for Frank H. Kidder (1887-1890), who authored *The Architect's Handbook,* and architect William Fisher (1890-1893) *(Amorette, 2007).*

Link won a national competition at the age of 22 for the design of the Minnesota State Capital. Hoping to capitalize on this experience, he moved to Montana in 1896 and settled in Butte, where he first formed a partnership with W. E. Donovan, under the name of Link & Donovan (1896-1900), and then with Joseph T. Carter (1900-1905).

In 1906 he formed a partnership with Charles S. Haire. Haire was from Ohio and received his early training in Cincinnati. He moved to Pocatello, Idaho in 1885 and worked for the Union Pacific Railway as a draftsman. He subsequently went to Butte and worked for the Great Northern Railroad in a similar position *(Withey, 1970).* About 1888 Haire moved to Helena, where he was employed by the real estate and construction firm Wallace and Thornburg

(1889-1891). He opened his own firm in 1891, which was involved in the design of institutions throughout the state. In Billings he was particularly known for the design of the 1901 Romanesque Revival Parmly Library and the first St. Vincent's Hospital, as well as many residences *(Brownell, 2010).*

Based on the strength of his earlier award, Link was commissioned by Montana State Architect Paulson to design the expansion of the Montana State Capital in Helena *("Pioneer Billings Architect Dies," 1954).* This work was undertaken by Link & Haire in association with New York architect Frank M. Andrews and constructed from 1909 to 1912 *("Helena: Standing Up for Montana").* It was one of their most important early commissions.

One of Link's first trips to Montana had been in 1890, when he undertook the building of the Billings Brewery Building in that city *("Pioneer Billings Architect Dies," 1954).* He settled there permanently in 1906, but maintained an office in Butte throughout his career. In addition to Billings, Butte and Helena, Link & Haire maintained offices in Bozeman, Missoula, and Lewistown at various times during their association *(Brownell, 2010).*

Link and Haire were considered the leading architects in the state in their 20 years of practice together. They designed "thousands of buildings statewide, both public and private, including 18 of the 56 county courthouses" *(Brownell, 2010).* Among their commissions were the Algeria Temple, the Scottish Rite Temple, and the Classical Revival Montana Life Insurance Building in Helena. In Billings they designed the Great Northern Hotel, the Stapleton Building, the Electric Building, the Hart-Albin Building, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, and the second St. Vincent's Hospital *(Brownell, 2010).*

In Butte they designed The Silver Bow Club, the Silver Bow County Courthouse and Silver Bow County Jail, the 1922 Masonic Lodge (with W. Wellington Smith), and the State Savings Bank (with George Carsley), among other buildings. They were also responsible for hospitals in Boulder, Billings, and Missoula, and buildings for the Montana State Universities in Missoula and Bozeman. Clients included the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company and the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company. They additionally designed over 100 schools, 50 churches, and 50 office buildings throughout Montana and the western states *(The Montana Historical Society, 2004).*

Link & Haire continued their partnership until Haire's death in 1925. J. G. Link left the firm in 1926 and was involved through the 1920s in lawsuits with Haire's estate over the firm's profits *("Stacks of Public Records Offered in Architect Case," 1929).* E. G. Benson, a former employee of Link & Haire, and Haire's son Thomas carried on that firm under the name of Haire and Benson, Architects. Link practiced under his own name and under the name of J. G. Link & Co.

Link married Martha Welling in St. Louis on September 17, 1895, whom he had met when he lived there briefly *("Local Couple Notes 50th Anniversary," 1945).* The Links, who moved to Billings in 1906, had one daughter and six sons *(US Census, 1920).* Elmer Link (born ca 1913) would later become a partner in his father's firm and John Gustav Link Jr., (born ca 1909) would also be trained as an architect (a son Frederick would die before his father). In 1920 the Links were living at 105 Yellowstone Avenue. Shortly thereafter Link moved the 1899 Queen Anne residence of Billings pioneers Kate and David Fratt from its original location at 205 N. 29th and had it reconstructed at 142 Clark Avenue (Link received the house in partial payment for the design of the Fratt Memorial Building at the house' original location). He was to live there for the rest of his life *(Reich, 2009).*

John G. Link continued to practice under his own name and his firm name of J. G. Link & Co. The firm name of J. G. Link, Inc. is seen in the 1920s through about 1930. He briefly used the name of J. G. Link and Son Co. in the mid-1930s. The name of J. G. Link & Co. began to surface in the late 1930s. In 1947 Link's son Elmer is listed as Secretary of J. G. Link & Co., but he also began to practice under the name of E. F. Link & Associates at this time. Billings architect Harry Loners was a draftsman for J. G. Link & Co. (Loners would work for the firm from 1935 to 1952). J. G. Link & Co. continued in business through the mid-1960s, ten years after the senior John Link's death in 1954 *(Montana Architectural Drawings - Montana State University Digital Initiatives).*

The name E. F. Link and Associates is also seen, however, from the late 1940s through the mid-1980s. Elmer's son John Gustav Link is listed in the 1952 directory of the American Society of Civil Engineers as a partner in J. G. Link and Co., Architects & Engineers, of Butte (he is also seen as John G. Link III), and he is noted as a managing architect on projects in the firm in the early 1970s. According to historian Chere Jiusto, Elmer Link is credited with the design of over 80 stores, warehouse and residences in the Billings area *(Jiusto, 1998).* He was most active, however, in the 1940s through the 1960s, where one of his most noteworthy commissions was for the 1966 GSA-sponsored US Courthouse in Billings.

The architect for the Webster Garfield Grade School is noted as both John G. Link and J. G. Link & Co. As a result, the architect of record cannot be determined without examining the drawings. However, the quality of the firm's work continued through the mid-twentieth century. There is no reason to believe that John G. Link, the firm's founder, was not actively involved in design in the mid-1940s, when this building was designed.

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Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NRHP Listing Date:
NRHP Eligibility: **X** Yes ☐ No **X** Individually ☐ Contributing to Historic District ☐ Noncontributing to Historic District
NRHP Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B **X** C ☐ D
Area of Significance: **Education** Period of Significance: **1946-47**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ☐ See Additional Information Page

The Webster Garfield School is significant as the first post-war school in Butte and the first school to embody modern planning and design principles that reflected contemporary thinking about school design. It is also significant as the work of John Gustav Link and his firm of J. G. Link & Co.

The Webster Garfield School embodies modern design concepts, particularly as they applied to elementary schools, which encouraged the design of one-story schools, built at grade, in an open campus design. These schools better reflected their typically suburban locations, but also provided easier access to the outdoors, an important design principle at the time. The use of large expanses of windows, single loaded corridors, and clerestory windows were also important at this time, as they provided natural light and ventilation and increased visual access to the outdoors.

The Webster Garfield School is also significant for its association with architect John G. Link. Link first attained prominence when he was commissioned to design the expansion of Montana's Capital building. When he began his association with Charles Haire, their firm became Montana's premier and probably most prolific architectural firm. They worked throughout the western United States, in addition to Montana. After Haire's death Link formed his own firm. He was later joined by his sons Elmer and John Jr. They continued designing significant structures throughout Montana, adopting a modernist vocabulary in the post-war years. The Webster Garfield School is an example of Link's post-war work, which retains the same design quality seen in the work undertaken in the first quarter of the century.

INTEGRITY ☐ See Additional Information Page

The Webster Garfield School has very good integrity. It retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Some materials were added and design changes made when some windows on the rear of the building were enclosed with corrugated metal and, in one instance, multi-light windows apparently replaced with double-hung windows. A few windows on the back have also been enclosed with concrete block. None of these changes are highly visible, however, and all other doors and windows are intact. Although the building is not longer solely an elementary school, the association remains intact, as it is still used for educational purposes.

East façade of north-south wing, north end, viewed from east

North façade of north-south wing, viewed from north

MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD
PHOTOGRAPHS

Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**

Description: **West (front) façade, main entry**

Description: **West (front) façade, detail to left of main entry**

MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD
PHOTOGRAPHS

Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**

Description: **South façade, south east-west wing, viewed from southeast**

Description: **North façade, south east-west wing, viewed from east**

MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD
PHOTOGRAPHS

Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**

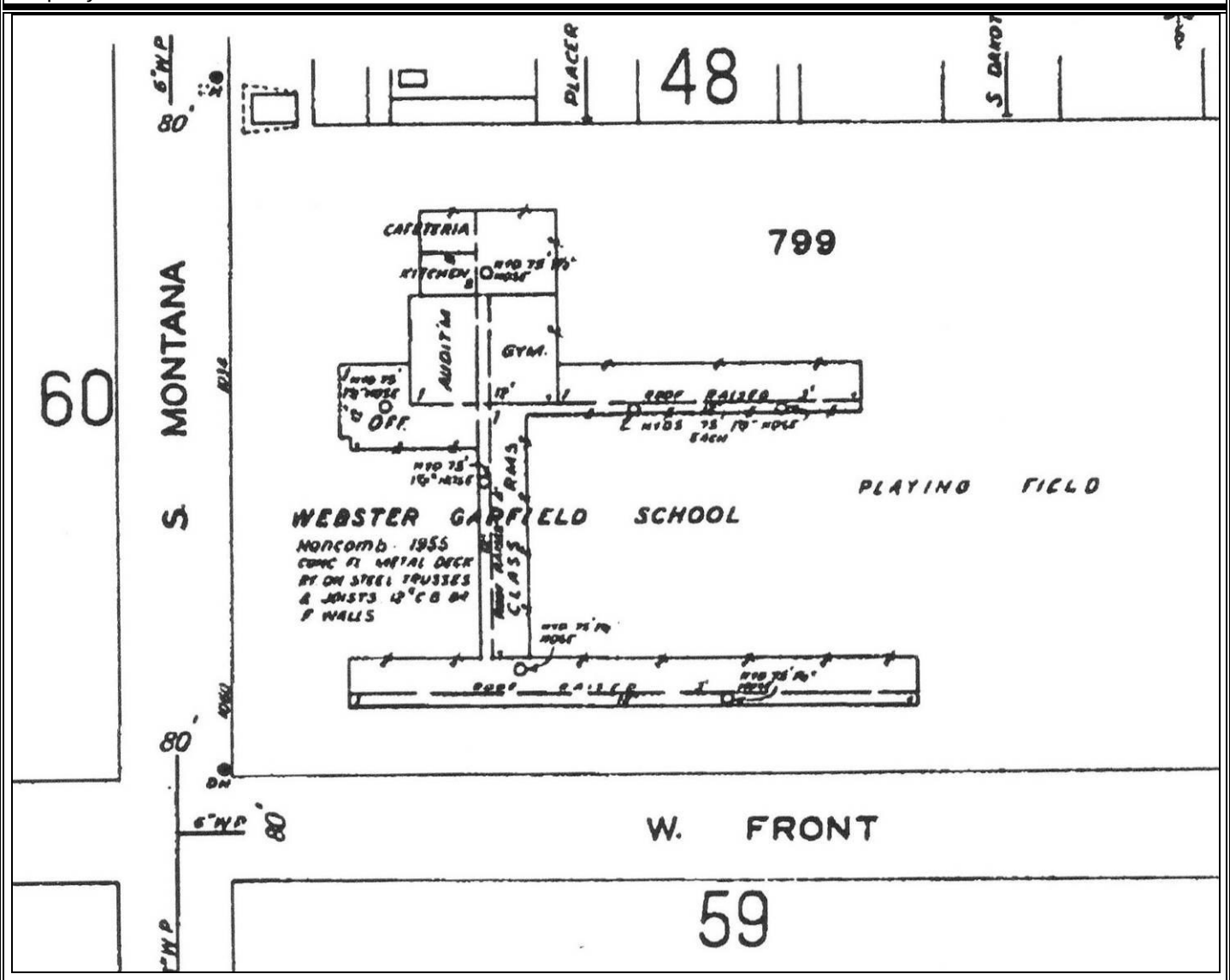
Description: **Entry on east end of south east-west wing, viewed from northeast**

Description: **East façade of north-south wing, south end, viewed from east**

MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD

SITE MAP

Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**



MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Property Name: **Webster Garfield School** Site Number: **24 SB 1046**